

Hobbies

Mountainous savings on commemorative if you rush more

By Roger Boye

Uncle Sam has launched a "pre-issue sale" for special coins commemorating the 50th anniversary of Mt. Rushmore, with price discounts of about 10 percent.

Collectors who submit orders for proof coins before March 28 will be charged \$8.50 for a copper-nickel half dollar, \$1 off the regular price; \$28 for a silver dollar, \$3 off; and \$195 for a coin containing .24 of an ounce of gold, \$30 off.

A three-coin proof set costs \$225 before March 28, a \$30 savings.

Officials have used similar discounts to stimulate sales of other commemorative coins, such as the Olympic issues of 1988. A sellout of the 5.5 million Mt.

Rushmore coins authorized by Congress would raise nearly \$19 million for repairs to the national memorial in South Dakota and the surrounding park.

Experts advise hobbyists to buy modern-day commemorative coins for their beauty and historical importance, not as a way to make money. Most of the coins issued in the U.S. Mint's seven commemorative programs since 1982 sell today for less than their government issue prices.

To place an order for Mt. Rushmore coins, call, toll-free, (1-800) 545-1111. For an order form, write to the United States Mint, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706; the mint also is offering uncirculated Mt. Rushmore coins, which cost slightly less than the proof specimens.

Later this year the government

will issue 1991-dated silver dollars commemorating the end of the Korean War and the 50th anniversary of the United Service Organizations. Mt. Rushmore coins probably will be sent to buyers starting in April.



Collectors will have to pay \$3 to be able to spend money this week at the Chicago International Coin Fair, the city's largest annual show devoted to foreign currency.

For the first time in 16 years, show sponsors will charge an admission fee to the fair's bourse area, where up to 120 coin dealers from several countries will sell their wares. An organizer blames the charge on increased costs of conducting the fair in a downtown hotel.

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 7

p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. next Sunday in the Regency Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 151 E. Wacker Drive.

This year's free educational forum includes a talk by Stanley L. Flegler of Michigan State University on a Black Sea hoard of ancient coins discovered three years ago. It begins at 4 p.m. Saturday in the hotel's New Orleans Room.

A list of hobby clubs that will meet in the hotel in conjunction with the fair will be available at the registration desk outside the Regency Ballroom. A free program for collectors ages 17 and

younger begins at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Toronto Room.

Ponterio & Associates of San Diego will auction hundreds of world coins with sessions beginning at 7 p.m. Friday and 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Saturday. Organizers predict that 2,000 persons will attend the fair.



As many as 30 dealers will sell old coins next Sunday at the annual show of the Will County Coin Club. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn near the intersection of Interstate Hwy. 80 and Larkin Avenue in Joliet. Admission is free.